

Jesus was and the kind of work he did. John says in his Gospel that had all that Jesus did and said been written, the world could not contain the books. Jno. 21: 25.

Lesson Story

Probably a few days after he had healed the paralytic in the synagog of Capernaum on the Sabbath day, Jesus went down by the shore of the lake. As usual, a multitude of people gathered about him. When a man makes every thought and deed preach the Gospel, people will crowd around him to hear his message. Jesus taught them. We know not what he said, but he was ever seeking to correct their false ideas and to implant in their minds the true conceptions of religion and life.

The Publican, Levi

As he passed along the sea shore he came in front of the custom house. This was situated near the shore of the lake in order to be at hand for the collection of toll from those who traveled the road which ran close by the shore. At this custom house sat the publican, or officer who collected the tolls for the Roman government. In this case he was a Jew named Levi—Matthew. Now, all publicans were hated by the Jews, but when the publican chanced to be a Jew, the other Jews treated him almost as an apostate from the faith, because they thought it was a sign of very little love of country when a Jew would go into the service of the heathen government which held them in political bondage, and would help wring from his own people money to support their conquerors. Hence, Levi must have been despised and hated by his own countrymen.

Doubtless, this man had often heard Jesus teach by the lake. He had seen the miracles of healing, and had heard the wonderful words of Jesus. In silence he had thought it all over and had come to the conclusion that this Man was more than most men. But, perhaps, on account of the way the Jews despised him, it had never occurred to him that he, a despised publican, could be a disciple of the great prophet, Jesus of Nazareth. This day, as Jesus passed by him, Christ, looking upon him said, "Follow me." It was Christ's usual form of calling men to be his professed disciples.

Levi—Matthew in the gladness of his heart at the opportunity to do as he wished rose up at once, left his place of business to go back to it no more and followed Jesus.

Eating With Publicans and Sinners

Probably, some time after this, on the invitation of Matthew, Jesus went to dinner with him. Matthew had very wisely asked a number of his friends, publicans and sinners, to come and meet Jesus, with the hope that Jesus might bless them as he had blessed him. Jesus with his disciples came and sat down with them all. He thus showed by example that he cared for those who were outcasts in the opinions of the Jews. Of course, the scribes of the Pharisees, who were everywhere now dogging his steps to find fault

with him, were present, not to eat, but to watch him. As they saw this religious teacher, Jesus, sitting at meat with publicans and sinners, and thus breaking a plain precept of the self-righteous Pharisee, they sneeringly said to his disciples, "See, your Master is eating and drinking with publicans and sinners. He must be like them, else he wouldn't have anything to do with them. What do you think of that kind of conduct?" Jesus heard of their words which they directed to the disciples in order to separate them from their Master, and said to the scribes, "They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. That is a proverb you believe. Why does that not apply to this case? I came not to call the righteous to the kingdom for they are already in it; I came not to call those who think themselves righteous, but are not, for they will not hear; but I am come to call sinners to myself and my kingdom, for they know they are sinners and are seeking something better and will answer my call. I have not called you because you think you are righteous. Such I cannot help." How it must have silenced these cavillers! Sometimes today Christians, so called, think Christians ought not to associate with the sinful, the outcast, the hopeless. Such is true of children whose habits are not formed. But a Christian should be a friend to the sinful, the outcasts and the hopeless, not for our own pleasure, but to help them and show them Jesus Christ.

Fasting

It chanced at this time that the Pharisees and the disciples of John the Baptist were fasting in observance of one of the feasts of the Jews. They were displeased that his disciples did not, as Jews, observe the feast. Jesus said, "My disciples are like the 'sons of the bride chamber,' i. e., friends of the bridegroom who accompany him to the house of the bride. How can they fast when the bridegroom is with them? I am the bridegroom. It would not look well for them to fast while I am yet with them. But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken violently from them. Then they will fast." Words spoken of the time when Jesus should lay down his life, at the demands of the Jews. Christ continued, "No man puts new wine into old bottles, or a new undressed, i. e., unshrunk, piece of cloth on an old torn garment to patch it. New wine will burst old wine skins. New cloth, when once it is wet will shrink and tear the old garment. So I do not teach my new truths in your old ways, but adopt my means and methods to my message. You teach the atonement thru the Passover. I shall teach it thru the communion of the bread and wine. You teach humility only by the precepts of your wise men. I shall teach it by an ordinance which I shall institute, when I shall wash my disciples' feet and command them thus to do perpetually. You teach a common brotherhood, and that only partially, by teaching men the honor of being Israel-

ites. I shall teach men the common brotherhood of man by taking your passover meal and making it into a Christian meal to be called *agape*. The truths which God has been trying to teach you are the same which I teach, but the old methods have fulfilled their usefulness, new methods must be used for the better expression of the new revelation."

How completely Jesus answered them we can see after all these centuries. How dull they were! How slow to see the truth of his words! Let us be ever ready to learn more and more about Jesus' words.

Lesson Applied

1. Go forth and seek men; then, they will seek you.
2. Jesus called Matthew in his place of business.
3. Jesus' call is imperative and to be instantly obeyed.
4. People are not necessarily wrong who do not do things our way.
5. There is a time to fast, but it is not made to order by arch-bishops, as is the Lenten season now a days, to be preceded and followed by wild excesses.
6. Do you want to help a sinner? Go, make him your friend.
7. Jesus came to save sinners.

Church News

Gleanings From the Way Side

Nothing very special or exciting to chronicle this week only things are moving on in the even tenor of their way. It was our privilege to preach for the Darwin people in February, had large congregations, the best news from that place is that they paid off a note of some \$250 on the church property during January. May the Lord bless them for good. I will visit them again soon.

We are almost snowed in with the heaviest snow storm of the season. Last Sunday being the fourth Sunday in February was our regular appointment at Lapaz. Very cold and small congregations to what we usually have. Something new took place between our appointments, the Brethren treated the church house to a new bell which was a desirable addition. Hope it may be the means of calling some to church and thru that to eternal life.

We will close our pastorate with the College Corner church this spring having served them for eight years. Brother Flora our pastor started for Cero Gordo, Ill., this morning, I am expecting to hear of him being snow bound somewhere on the rolling prairies.

Brother W. H. Miller pulled in Monday evening from Michigan tired, worn and weary from constant labor.

May the Lord bless the cause of the Brethren church and her ministers altogether for good. Your brother in the hope of eternal life thru Jesus Christ our Lord.

WM. W. SUMMERS.

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